

Recycle your old computer

Don't just junk it! Recycled, it can be of enormous benefit to disabled people – especially children.

Neil Sleight refurbishes and adapts computers, particularly for children with special needs (he is himself the father of such a 14 year old), whom he visits to assess and advise, demonstrating programmes to develop language,

numeracy and communication then providing training and support.

Particularly useful are Pentium 2 or 3, desktop or laptop computers, printers and monitors too.

Elizabeth Cockburn is helping by collecting old computers, etc. for him – just drop them in any morning at 30 South Way, please.

News from Fellowship

It is the time of year when the Residents Association is passing on to Fellowship the generous donations collected along with RA membership fees.

The Gift Aid scheme means that for every £1 donated by residents, Fellowship can reclaim 28p. This makes a considerable difference to Fellowship finances and we are very grateful to those residents who have signed a Gift Aid Declaration.

By the time this issue of *Suburb News* is published we shall have had our annual visit by the Senior Care and Leisure group from Toynbee Hall. In

June this annual event was reciprocated by a visit to Toynbee Hall of a coach load of Fellowship members for the St Jude's Prom held in the 'cradle' of the Suburb. It was a very jolly afternoon, much enjoyed by Fellowship members – another link between the Suburb and its origins.

Had it not been for the vision of Henrietta Barnett, we would not now be living in this wonderful part of London: there is nowhere else quite like it, either visually or for its community spirit.

EILEEN WHELAN

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Suburb sculptor's homeless figures 'engage public sympathy'

This show is the latest stage in a long process of development. I refer not just to the sculptures themselves (begun in 1992, the most recent pieces added this year) but to their purpose and function and the reasoning behind the present show.

The figures started when I was a student at the City Poly in Whitechapel and were a simple, undirected response to people I used to see every day, sheltering in doorways and underpasses around Aldgate. To start with I had no other purpose in mind; but as they began to emerge in my work, I realised they were trying to express something, not by my intention, but by their very presence. I showed them to CRISIS who lived across the road, and together we put on a small show at All Hallows by the Tower.

They continued to arrive after I had moved to the Middlesex University Art School at Wood Green and today they number some two dozen figures. During 1995-96 they were used by The Prince's Trust in their 'Invest in Futures' campaign and were shown in eight different cities around the country, but these were all private events to which the public was not invited. However, their first public showings at Southwark

and St Albans Cathedrals on behalf of CRISIS, in 1996-7, produced a powerful response in those who saw them – people were throwing money into the lap of the figure with the PLEASE placard, because they wanted to help, but there was no-one to ask or to show them how. At a later show in Islington on Housing and Homelessness, where they featured among the work of 20 artists, once again there was no presence from the homeless charities.

From this I came to realise that if one wanted to use the sculptures to engage public sympathy, not just for the plight of the homeless, but to enlist their aid in the work of the charities – what was being done for homeless people, and what was being achieved – one should begin planning such an event with the charity organisations from the start.

This was put to the test in Guildford last year; a two week exhibition mounted by Guildford Social Services, with the local branch of Groundswell and the Guildford Churches proved, in the words of the organisers, that "art can act as a vital catalyst in empowering both committees and individuals".

Now we have done this on a bigger scale in London at St



George's Cathedral in June, St Bride's Church in Fleet Street in July, followed by Westminster City Hall. In October the figures go to Oxford (Cowley) for six weeks, returning to London in November. In the longer term I hope we may be able to bring about a national touring exhibition, featuring work from

many sources – including that of homeless people themselves – to present to the widest possible public the issues of homelessness, how it is being addressed and to what effect, restoring to homeless people a proper sense of their own identity and their place as individuals in society.

ALEC WORSTER



Bill Bailey and his wife Tina enjoying retirement.

S. F. 'Bill' Bailey CBE 1916-2002

When Bill Bailey joined the Residents Association Council in 1989 we benefited enormously from his experience and expertise, which was always generously available to the many organisations with which he was associated.

He had been a journalist, civil servant, senior government official in colonial Kenya (for which he was awarded the CBE), University Grants Committee Secretary in Hong Kong, where he founded the International Arts Centre and patron of the Cutty Sark Trust in Greenwich.

In 1983 he and his wife Tina settled in Hampstead Way. Tina had worked in the Ministry of Information at the end of the war, where she met Joanne Bower, who lived on the Suburb and was equally interested in animal welfare.

Bill was elected to the RA Executive Committee and became an invaluable member of the Roads and Traffic Committee under the chairmanship of David Rapson. He was well versed in the procedures of officialdom and put forward

proposals for traffic calming on the Suburb, as had been adopted in Small Heath, Birmingham, where he grew up. He took part in the interminable, but inconclusive, Henly's Corner Inquiry. In July 1994 they moved to South London for family reasons and were elected honorary Life Members of the RA in 1995.

He enjoyed dramatic productions – he and Tina had met at an amateur theatre in North London – and took part in A Midsummer Night's Dream, amongst others, on the Suburb.

In meetings and a great variety of writings, he expressed himself clearly and firmly, with an abhorrence of jargon, while never being solemn or pompous. He strongly believed in getting on with the matter in hand and hated waffle.

Many of his extended family and friends, including some from the Suburb, attended a celebration of his life on 8 June 2002 at Lewisham Crematorium and to say goodbye to a lovely man.

CAMILLA RAAB

Leonard Potiphar 1901-2002

One of the Suburb's oldest residents died, aged 100, in May. Leonard (Len) Potiphar was born in Hackney on 22 September 1901. He served in India during the second world war and afterwards worked for a company making building materials.

Len and his wife, Winifred, lived for many years in Wordsworth Walk. Following her death, he moved to The Orchard where he lived for over 20 years. Until relatively recently he was very active in the Suburb community.

Len and Win were members of the Horticultural Society for many years, and Len served as Show Secretary for 18 years, retiring in 1990, when he became one of the Society's Honorary Vice-Presidents. He won numerous cups and prizes for his exhibits in the shows and also enjoyed icing celebration cakes for many a wedding.

He was a skilled watercolourist and his paintings and drawings were exhibited regularly and always snapped up by keen buyers. His flower line drawings appear on the covers of the annual Horticultural Society handbooks and will continue to do so as a fitting memorial. The Society also plans to dedicate a silver cup in his name.

As the Orchard's oldest and longest resident, it is hoped that one of Len's paintings will hang in the lobby there in the near future for everyone to remember him by.

Last September Len enjoyed his 100th birthday celebration with friends and neighbours around him at a party organised by family friend Diane Berger at the Orchard, with a card from the Queen and champagne and a splendid cake.

MARJORIE HARRIS



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